

The Doctrines of Grace
Irresistible Grace or The Effectual Call
Ps 110:3

Introduction:

1. So far we have learned:
 - a. That all mankind is totally depraved – helpless / hopeless
 - b. Man does not seek God – man goes in the other direction
 - c. God would have been altogether just and right in leaving man in this terrible state to go to everlasting punishment
 - d. But because of grace, God decided to save some to the praise of the glory of His grace
 - e. He leaves the rest in their sins to the praise of the glory of His justice
 - f. For the elect ones, Jesus came into the world and died for their sins as their substitute
2. Everything up to this point is ordained in orderly fashion by an all-wise, all-powerful God who does as He pleases.
3. How silly to stop here and believe that everything else is left up to the will and fickle whim of man
4. If man accepts all that has been done for him, he is saved – if he does not, then God is denied and defeated, a miserable failure unable to finish what he has started.
5. God has not built a bridge half-way across to salvation and then left the rest up to sinful man, dead in trespasses and in sins
6. The God who decreed salvation to his elect ones and died in their places, will also “save his people from their sins”
 - a. The fact that he will save is here called “irresistible grace”
 - b. Wouldn’t it be pitiful to choose a people and then not call them out and draw them to salvation?
7. Ps 110:3 “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power”
 - a. Shall be, not might be, not probably be, not hopefully be
 - b. That certainty is irresistible grace
8. The effectual call is different from the general call
 - a. The general call goes out to all people indiscriminately whereas the effectual call goes to the elect only
 - b. General call is resisted but the effectual cannot ultimately be resisted
 - c. General Call - Pr 1:24 Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;
 - d. Effectual Call - Ac 16:14 And a certain woman named Lydia ...whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

I. The Meaning of Irresistible Grace

A. Resist

1. Re = back and sisto = to set and ir = not
2. Thus we have “not able to be set back” not to be obstructed or not to be opposed

B. Grace

1. God’s unmerited favor
2. We receive that which we don’t deserve
3. It is the opposite of merit

C. All Those for Whom Jesus Died Will Be Saved

1. The work of the Spirit in bringing people to Christ is always effectual
2. Some say “effectual calling” instead of irresistible grace
3. There is no one God tries to save and He can’t save them
4. The call of God is not frustrated by the will of man; for if this were true then none would ever be saved
 - a) *Lost man loves sin and is bound in sin*
 - b) *If any are ever turned into the path of righteousness, then it must be by the irresistible call of the Spirit*
5. **1Co 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.**
 - a) *The general call went out to the Greeks and Jews*
 - b) *It was effectual only to those whom God called*

II. The Ministry of Irresistible Grace

A. As Seen in Scripture

1. **Ps 65:4 Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth (election), and causeth to approach unto thee (effectual call), that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.**
2. **Jer 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love (election) : therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee (irresistible grace).**
3. **Joh 6:37 All that the Father giveth me (election) shall come to me (effectual call); and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 44 No man can come to me (depravity, inability), except the Father which hath sent me draw him (irresistible grace): and I will raise him up at the last day.**
 - a) *The Father has given certain to Jesus*
 - b) *Every one of them will come to Jesus*

- c) *Left to ourselves we would never come to Christ*
- d) *We must be lovingly drawn by the Holy Spirit*
 - (1) “Draw” is used in Jn 21:6, 11 where the men are drawing a net of fish. The net cannot resist the fishermen as they draw it. It is helpless and passive.
 - (2) Jn 18:10 Peter draws the sword to cut Malchus
 - (3) Acts 16:19 Paul and Silas are dragged into the marketplace
 - (4) Acts 21:30 – Paul was dragged out of the temple
- 4. **Ro 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate (election), them he also called (effectual calling): and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.**
 - a) *There is finality and certainty in this verse*
 - b) *This certainty exists because God works irresistibly in the lives of those He has foreknown*
- 5. **Joh 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold (election): them also I must bring (effectual calling), and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.**
- 6. **1Th 1:4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God (election). 5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power (effectual calling), and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.**
 - a) *The general call of the gospel will not save*
 - b) *It must be accompanied by the special power of the HS working in the heart, convincing of sin and drawing the sinner to Christ*
 - c) *The general call is external, but the effectual call is internal*
- 7. **Whenever the call of the Spirit is referred to in the Scriptures it is always spoken of as being effectual**
 - a) *Ro 1:6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:*
 - b) *Ga 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,*
 - c) *1Pe 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;*

B. As Seen in Scriptural Terms

- 1. Resurrection
 - a) *Salvation involves a resurrection*
 - b) *The dead sinner receives spiritual life from God*
 - c) *The dead cannot resist the resurrection of God*
- 2. New birth
 - a) *Salvation involves a new birth*
 - b) *No one can refuse to be born*
 - c) *It is entirely out of their hands*
 - d) *No one resists the new birth*
- 3. Creation / workmanship
 - a) *2Co 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:*

old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

- (1) When one is saved he is spoken of as a new creation in Christ
 - (2) Nothing that was created ever refused to be created
 - (3) When God decided to create the universe, nothing could resist since God is omnipotent and can do what He pleases
- b) *Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*
- (1) We are God's workmanship
 - (2) The thing made cannot refuse to be made

C. Seen in Examples

1. Saul of Tarsus – Acts 9
 - a) *He was going to Damascus to apprehend Christians*
 - b) *He had authority to capture and sake back to Jerusalem those who followed Christ*
 - c) *On the road to Damascus his heart was filled with hatred toward Christ and his followers – he is bent on persecuting the saints and destroying the religion of Christ*
 - d) *Yet in great power God changed the mind of Saul enabling him to hear the voice of the Son of God and cry out “Lord, what will thou have me to do?” – vs 6*
 - e) *Saul became Paul the apostle and was greatly used of God*
2. Lazarus dead in the grave – Jn 11
 - a) *He had been in the grave for 3 days*
 - b) *He is bound and wrapped in grave clothes*
 - c) *His body had begun to decay and his is giving off a stench – he lay in the dark cave with a stone over the door*
 - d) *The physical condition of Lazarus pictures the spiritual condition*
 - (1) Dead -- In the darkness of sin
 - (2) The stone of rebellion over their hearts and minds
 - e) *Christ called with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth” and he came out bound hand and foot “Loose him and let him go”*
 - f) *What a picture of the effectual call*

III. Misunderstanding of Irresistible Grace

A. It Does Not Save One Against His Will

1. God does not drag people down the aisle kicking and screaming against their wills
2. He is able to make them willing on the day of His power
3. The effectual call produces in the sinner a genuine willingness to come to Jesus for salvation, pardon and cleansing from sin

B. Can't God's Grace be Rejected?

1. Few are saved the first time that they hear the gospel
2. Acts 7:51 – ye do always resist the Holy Ghost

3. The Holy Spirit came be resisted some, but not successfully

C. Why Does God Allow The General Call to Go Out Knowing that It Will Be Ineffectual Without His Power?

1. We might as well ask by God gave the law when he knew that man could not obey it
2. Why did God institute moral government when He knew that men would not submit?
3. Why did God tell us to be holy even as he is holy when he knew we couldn't?

Conclusion:

1. God can send adversity to make people turn to Him
2. God can use the "sugar approach" and give people all the goods they want to try to draw them
3. God can use the miracle approach but the Pharisees saw the miracles and did not believe
4. In the days of Noah, prophetic preaching was scoffed at
5. When we truly understand that God is responsible for the effectual call, all gimmicks, gadgets, and psychological trickery that men has resorted to in our day will be regarded as futile.
6. Long invitations, altar calls, and emotional appeals do not bring men to Christ, God does
1Co 2:4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.
7. I want to preach with all my might but I must depend entirely upon God to draw wayward sinners to Christ

